

ABSTRACT

EXTENDABLE PROVISIONING MECHANISM
FOR A SERVICE GATEWAY

A service gateway connects at least one local client to an external network. The service gateway is operable to hold at least one service module for providing a corresponding service and to maintain a record identifying each service module held by the service gateway with an associated pointer to that service module. The service gateway includes a control mechanism providing a number of functions. The control mechanism is operable in response to a request for a service provided by a service module not present at the service gateway, to send a message to an external source for resolving the absence of a service module at the gateway in one or more iterations until a response from the external service identifies information including a service module held by the gateway that enables resolution of the absent service module(s). The service gateway is thus arranged to provide an iterative, or recursive, process for repeatedly seeking a further service until the necessary software and/or data is available at the service gateway to satisfy the original service request.

Figure 5